REMARKS

1. Claim Rejections – 35 U.S.C. § 103(a)

The Examiner rejected claims 30-45 and 48 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Marnell (US 5,393,057) in view of Giobbi (US 2002/0107072). Applicants respectfully traverse this rejection. However, in an effort to provide clarification, independent claims 30, 38, and 48 have been amended. For the sake of brevity, the rejections of the independent claims are discussed in detail on the understanding that the dependent claims are also patentably distinct over the prior art, as they depend directly from their respective independent claims. Nevertheless, the dependent claims include additional features that, in combination with those of the independent claims, provide further, separate and independent bases for patentability.

The Examiner has stated that claims 30-45 and 48 are unpatentable as being obvious over Marnell in view of Giobbi. However, the Examiner acknowledges that "Marnell is silent ... regarding a third display device." See final Office Action of April 10, 2007, Pg. 2. Specifically, the claimed invention recites a gaming machine having a reconfigurable middle display panel, a reconfigurable top glass panel, and a reconfigurable belly glass panel. Moreover, the claimed invention recites a gaming machine in which "the reconfigurable middle display panel, the reconfigurable top glass panel, and the reconfigurable belly glass panel comprise the first video screen, the second video screen, and the third video screen."

Nevertheless, the Examiner asserts that Giobbi teaches three or more displays terminals (Para. 0019, 0020; Fig. 1; element 12a-12n), but in actuality, these references merely disclose multiple gaming machines. The display terminals in Giobbi are clearly described as gaming machines, not video screens. Thus, Giobbi teaches the use of multiple gaming machines in a gaming system, but does NOT teach the use of three video screens in a single gaming machine (i.e., the claimed reconfigurable middle display panel, reconfigurable top glass panel, and reconfigurable belly glass panel are not shown), as required in the claimed invention. Indeed, while the Examiner may argue that Giobbi discloses a primary (middle) display panel and a secondary (top glass) panel, the Giobbi clearly lacks the reconfigurable belly glass panel element of the claimed invention.

Furthermore, the claimed invention recites "a first video screen displaying the first game located on the gaming machine; a second video screen displaying pay tables associated with the first game located on the gaming machine; and a third video screen displaying artwork associated with the theme of the first game located on the gaming machine; wherein the reconfigurable middle display panel, the reconfigurable top glass panel, and the reconfigurable belly glass panel comprise the first video screen, the second video screen, and the third video screen; and wherein the gaming machine is reconfigurable to display the second game on the three video screens in response to a remotely activated reconfiguration command." Accordingly, the claimed invention requires that the reconfigurable middle display panel, the reconfigurable top glass panel, and the reconfigurable belly glass panel each provide specialized functions (game play, pay tables for the game, and theme artwork associated with the game, respectively) that enable a gaming machine to be completely transformed, both in function and appearance, from one game theme to another game theme.

Therefore, neither the Marnell reference nor the Giobbi reference, teaches or suggests, either alone or in combination, each and every element (e.g., reconfigurable middle display panel, a reconfigurable top glass panel, and a reconfigurable belly glass panel) of the claimed invention, as amended. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully submit that the 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) rejection of claims 30-45 and 48 as unpatentable has been overcome.

2. 37 CFR § 1.131 Declaration of Prior Invention

Regarding the Giobbi reference, in the attached 37 CFR 1.131 Declaration of Prior Invention (See Attachment A), Applicants swear behind the unclaimed portion of the Giobbi reference. That is, the unclaimed portion of the Giobbi reference is not prior art to the claimed invention of the present application, since the claimed invention was invented before the priority date of the Giobbi reference (February 7, 2001). Specifically, the cited Giobbi publication (2002/0107072) issued as U.S. Patent No. 6,749,510. Since the disclosure cited by the Examiner in the current rejection is not claimed in the Giobbi patent, this disclosure is subject to a Declaration of Prior Invention under 37 CFR § 1.131 (a)(1) and (2).

CONCLUSION

Applicants have made an earnest and bona fide effort to clarify the issues before the Examiner and to place this case in condition for allowance. In view of the foregoing discussions, it is clear that the differences between the claimed invention and the cited references are such that the claimed invention is patentably distinct over the cited references. Therefore, reconsideration and allowance of all of Applicants' claims 30-45 and 48 is believed to be in order, and an early Notice of Allowance to this effect is respectfully requested.

The Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge the fees indicated in the Fee Transmittal, any additional fee(s) or underpayment of fee(s) under 37 CFR 1.16 and 1.17, or to credit any overpayments, to Deposit Account No. 194293, Deposit Account Name STEPTOE & JOHNSON LLP.

Should the Examiner have any questions concerning the foregoing, the Examiner is invited to telephone the undersigned attorney at (310) 734-3244. The undersigned attorney can normally be reached Monday through Friday from about 9:30 AM to 6:30 PM Pacific Time.

Respectfully submitted,

Date: August 6, 2007

Brooke W. Quist
Reg. No. 45,030
STEPTOE & JOHNSON LLP
2121 Avenue of the Stars
Suite 2800
Los Angeles, CA 90067
Tel 310.734.3200
Fax 310.734.3300